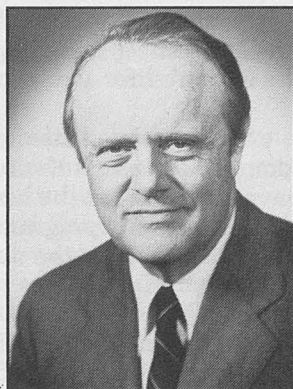


Edward T. "Ned" Breathitt was governor of Kentucky from 1963-67, and served in the Kentucky State Legislature for three terms. Gov. Breathitt, an attorney, has been vice president for Southern Railway System and Norfolk Southern Corporation, and Senior Vice President of Norfolk Southern Corporation until his retirement in March 1992.

He graduated from the University of Kentucky and served three years in the Army Air Force in World War II.



WELCOME AND REMARKS
Monday, September 28, 1992

Ned Breathitt
Former Governor of Kentucky

HISTORY OF TRANSPORTATION IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Not long after Cal Grayson invited me to speak at this Forum, I had the good fortune of having lunch at one of our state parks. I looked at the map printed on the table mat—it was a map made up entirely of Kentucky's interstates and parkways. I suddenly realized something I had not thought about before—not one of the highways covering the entire state existed before the 1960 administration of Bert Combs or of my term as governor 30 years ago. Most of the system was on the drawing board within my administration, and both systems were basically complete by 1980—within the terms of Governors Louie Nunn, Wendell Ford, and Julian Carroll.

Let me make clear that important highway development in Kentucky had gone on before this two-decade period, and has continued through today.

Three points of unusual significance, based on policies by five governors, have produced historic change in Kentucky. I'm talking about a reversal of a negative problem for every aspect of Kentucky's development since just after the Civil War—and a concept that has new potential in future development of the Commonwealth.

First, the Interstate System is one of the great accomplishments of all time—in concept, in planning, in political leadership, and in impact on the nation's life.

Second—in a little noted factor—had the Interstate System been completed through Kentucky as a system by itself, the impact might well have compounded the historical negatives Kentucky has suffered for so long. Like many programs of national design for national benefit, the favorable effect on the nation could have been matched by clear negative impacts on Kentucky.

Third, the Parkway System reversed the negatives of the interstates and captured their benefit. The ten parkways (we could call them the Kentucky Area Development System) linked every area of the state to the national commerce on the interstates in ways that the national system did not serve.

Now, I'll have some explaining to do, but it's an important explanation.

I will talk about all transportation modes, but the parkway demonstration of a complete turnaround in policy and a breakthrough for Kentucky development is important to illustrate a concept with major benefit for Kentucky and with real potential for Kentucky's future.

The historical problem in Kentucky transportation began ironically with Kentucky's excellent system of navigable rivers—the great Ohio and Mississippi Rivers connected to the nation plus the excellent internal system of tributary rivers reached into broad areas of the state, but did not serve every locality. (The problem is well laid out by John Whisman in the Transpo "Calendar of Kentucky Transportation History.")

To take advantage of the rivers, the early settlers developed turnpikes (and later the rail lines) to reach mostly north-south, but always to connect their settlements with the rivers. The approach served well for awhile; but, in a short time, the dominance of the riverways was replaced by the development, first of national rail lines, and then of the "national road" and other highway routes, from the east coast all the way to the west coast.

In a few decades, Kentucky, with its great connections to national waterways, saw the nation's major land transportation routes bypass it. Not only was this hurtful, but the state was left without good internal east-west routes to tie areas together. A major effect of this was to leave the state's greatly differing areas isolated from each other. This produced uneven development, in which the state has long had to carry the burden of low-income areas within its overall economy, while many of its people have never had the opportunities they deserved. The effect, especially in

the heavily agrarian economy, was to leave the state slow in its development of education and health services and in its public spirit and leadership to pull together for progressive program actions that were needed.

Many of us today do not realize that Kentucky held a strong economic position among the states and was among the top three or four states out of the 31, which were established by 1850, in agricultural and other production. But, as transportation systems bypassed Kentucky and as the deficient internal routes failed to hold the long east-west state together, Kentucky's historic lag behind the nation began in education, urbanization, technology adaptation, and industrial production. Kentucky's rank among states rapidly dropped to the low levels which have plagued us ever since.

The state has struggled with these problems over many years of its history. But I don't believe you can find a time in our history when we have treated all of the key problems in a combination of actions based on a central strategy as we did in the '60s. To do so meant changing our state approach and the near impossibility of changing basic federal policies to be able to move the strategy to real action.

We have much yet to do and I believe we can learn much from the strategy of the '60s. The Parkway System can illustrate the concept (including its effect on many other program areas) and implications for further action that could be taken. Today, I will focus on the importance of understanding the developmental concept of the Kentucky Parkway System in order to see it applied even more effectively to all of transportation and development.

Some of you can remember that when the Mountain Parkway was first proposed, opponents referred to it as "the road from noplac to noplac." A good look at the design of the parkways and at their purpose as a system can show that the phrase "noplac to noplac" was surprisingly correct—but for an entirely different reason than the critics had in mind.

The Mountain Parkway does not begin at Winchester—it begins at a point about two miles from Winchester, on Interstate 64. It does not go to Prestonsburg—it goes to a point two or three miles from Prestonsburg on Route 23. Origin and destination points for other parkways are similar. For instance, the Bluegrass Parkway departs from US 60 at a point halfway between Lexington and Versailles.

These points of origin are not "places" in the sense of actual town locations. The system could be noted as "connecting other systems of roads together." But, in terms of transportation design, the parkways connect together an important series of points within each of all of the state's "development areas." With this concept of bringing Kentucky's areas

together, the parkways have reversed the historical isolation of many areas—a plague that could have been further compounded by the national design of the interstates, which were really based on connecting the large urban centers of the nation. Thus, the parkways connect all areas of the state and put the entire system within reach of every citizen.

While much remains to be done in improvement of routes, this breakthrough has given us a totally new outlook on development potentials, different from the one Kentucky faced for a century, prior to the '60s, '70s, and '80s.

But the development investment in parkways was not simply for transportation; it made four basic differences in the overall scope and strategy of development:

1. The parkways changed both Kentucky's existing highway system (with its inadequate connection of the state's east, center, and west) and interstates (designed primarily to serve major national urban centers). The parkways made both focus on an historical Kentucky need to tie differing areas together.
2. The parkway investment was to stimulate payoff development of each area. To give the people of each area a mechanism for more coordinated development, the system of Kentucky Area Development Districts was created. Used as intended, ADDs can be as important a system as are the parkways.
3. The parkways were just one basic part of a *strategic combination* of program investments which, designed together to meet specific needs of each area, can be more effective than any could be alone. Continued developmental efforts in education and health reform, environmental quality, and economic development and other fields, have helped build the strategy.
4. Most significant for transportation policy, the parkway concept is not just to move people and goods from place to place, but it is to be a basic factor in improving the shape of the places of destination and of origin.

While all transportation has a developmental effect, Kentucky's Parkway System stands alone in its demonstration of this concept—with major impact on the policies of other states and the federal government. While we know that this Kentucky concept has had wide impact for us and for others, the fact is that the impact has not been good enough.

We have not used the concept well enough. One reason is that this concept requires an interaction among several programs and, if other

programs (particularly those with the power of federal policies) continue to follow separate approaches, results will be piecemeal, not systematic, in process or strategic in results.

The basic changes in many aspects of our times requires that we work toward more integrated program action, better focused on development objectives. But, just as important, basic change today—in technology, in communications, in management practices—all can help us implement this kind of strategy.

As a governor of 30 years ago and, in the spirit of your Transpo look at the future, I wonder what situation will face Kentucky's governor 30 years from now. She will be campaigning in September for the November 2023 election. The 2023 campaign itself will be different from the ones we've known.

Certainly with the great technology now in place to better manage information and communication, we will see information better translated into real concerns of people and more meaningful two-way communication between people and leaders.

Campaign financing may be better handled and the greater problems of defining objectives, and the action to meet them, can get better treatment. One thing is sure—development capacity will change. But the difference will depend very much on how we move now for more effective ideas and concepts—and how well we use the great new capacities already open to us.

We can examine a few of the factors which will help shape the election and programs of Kentucky's governor in 2023. But I will treat these factors in the sense of what we do now as a basis for what they could turn out to be by 2023. A key factor in the campaign and in the role of governor as the state's chief policy leader and program manager will be greater and better participation of more people. This process will grow from beginnings already in place and from deliberate work to improve it.

The statewide health forums produced by the ADDs as part of Governor Jones's effort to involve more people in the issues of health reform and the work of the Legislature is a limited example. But, the work of ADDs in creating Strategic Area Development Programs can go much further in making the process effective for more people.

A second key factor—the combination of separate programs into better impact on targeted strategic development objectives—is likely to be well advanced. It will affect the kind of issues involved in campaigns as well as the more effective treatment of needs in programs to follow. This will be true because people will have some greater understanding of what

they need and want programs to do to affect their lives, directly, in their own home areas.

But, also, the Office of Governor will have greater capacity to work with people, to work in partnerships among the levels of government and between public and private sectors and to shape programs to better meet specific objectives.

Third, the structure of the federal system may finally achieve the "Creative Federalism" we proposed in the '60s, but that is still not in effective operation. Kentucky has the model to use federal resources more effectively within state management and local application, and the governor in 2023 will benefit if the model can be adopted before his time.

In the midst of a Presidential campaign, as we were in during 1960, a quick look at the Kentucky model may be significant. For shorthand, the Kentucky model embodies the Kentucky Area Development Program and the process of the Appalachian Regional Program, but to be used in all states and in all areas. However, here at Transpo, we can focus the model on transportation.

In proposing the Mountain Parkway, we heard the same thing we hear today—there isn't enough money to do new programs. But why not use existing state and federal funds for the high priority we had for roads like Mountain Parkway. The problem was clear. Maintenance demand for Kentucky road funds severely limited new construction. Construction funds had to match available federal funds. Thus federal criteria controlled new state construction. Federal criteria, designed to meet existing growth, left no funds for "development highways."

But the Eastern Kentucky Development Commission had created plans, not just for an Eastern Kentucky system, but for an entire Appalachian development program—from a new state-federal regional commission and area development districts to a feasible "regional development highway system."

Meanwhile, back in the Clements and Wetherby Administrations, the idea of toll financing had been revived to produce the first parkway, from Louisville south to Elizabethtown. Put the two ideas together and you had the Mountain Parkway. But there was more to it. The Mountain Parkway became the model for the statewide Development Parkway System—followed by the Western Kentucky Parkway and the others. It could be said that the western end of the Mountain Parkway was actually to be in the Purchase Area, at Paducah.

The Mountain Parkway also sold the Kentucky area development concept to both John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson (a matter to which I can give personal testimony) for their support of the Appalachian

program and other federal programs such as the economic development program, which we utilized to the maximum in taking the process to all Kentucky areas.

Next, the concept of relating transportation modes together and of tying transportation investment to overall development objectives in education, health, community infrastructure, economic development, and environmental conservation, was also a model that we were able to build into federal programs to make federal resources support our Kentucky objectives.

So, the road from noplacement to noplacement really went someplace.

It became our route to successful development against the historical odds faced by Kentucky. Today we still need more roads and better use of rivers, railways, and airways. But, we need even more to advance the concept that has been used so well not just to produce some specific development results, but to build our ability for even greater action as the foundation work is completed and we can reach for greater payoff in direct benefit to people.

A fourth major factor can be in the use of technology by 2023. Even now, two benefits from technology application need greater attention. New technologies enable us to convert more resources to development, either in industry or in public programs, with less cost in the investment of resources. Technology also makes production processes and jobs more mobile.

Both benefits can be significant in new development potentials for Kentucky areas still short on local resources—to allow greater mobility and effectiveness of scarce or imported resources for development.

Fifth, in a developing national pattern, development is occurring not just in large, urban, "growth centers," but in terms of "area-wide service systems." This pattern, with growth in many rural areas in dispersed and diversified "service and residential parks," is on the increase throughout the nation; it can be advanced by better technology, and can be adapted to Kentucky areas. This approach to "area-wide service levels" can help produce sustainable development in each of Kentucky's 15 development areas, related to basic services in our mid-size-to-large urban centers, such as those in the urban triangle. Stability in each area can change the entire Commonwealth.

There is a major but different role for transportation in strategies to attain area-wide service levels. As we look at the apparent costs of future transport development, with current outlook for people to commute to jobs and services, we see costs exceeding likely sources of revenue for basic infrastructure. Changing the workplace and service locations in

each area may be a way to reduce commuting and gain an affordable new pattern of infrastructure.

Sixth, in these patterns in the "Information Age," we see transportation beginning to merge with communication techniques to serve new potentials for development. As traditional transport modes shift (with river and rail shifting to specialized freight hauling as passenger travel goes to highways and airways) and as we see new potentials for urban transit and light-rail passenger service in and between our urban centers, we become aware of major changes for transportation.

Yet, we have hardly touched the surface. For instance, now that units of information are treated as having capital value or as being "products" to be transported, we find express companies who may carry a package by ground or air transport, or who may transmit the information in the package by electronic devices. Obviously, these techniques will change our view and use of transportation with real potential benefit for Kentucky.

Finally, if we succeed in today's Kentucky strategies for education and health reform, that governor of 2023 will be looking at a citizenry and a workforce that is the product of the kind of new personal development system we can produce in the next few years. Little more need be said about this potential, other than that it will make the greatest difference in the success to be produced by the time the governor's term is completed in 2027.

Looking back over the 200 years of our bicentennial, this Transpo Conference is an especially appropriate celebration of Kentucky's beginning. Daniel Boone and the others who came through the Cumberland Gap over the Wilderness Road or down the Ohio to reach Kentucky were certainly pioneers in both development and in transportation. They created a state of transportation by making Kentucky both a place to go to for settlements and new life, and also a place from which many could prepare to travel on the longer journey to develop the rest of our nation.

At this Transpo, we can join them in pioneering new concepts in which transportation can serve even more effectively in the development of the kind of new life for people that was envisioned in the creation of Kentucky. ■